I CLAIM:

- A method of delivering a component to the colon of an animal comprising:
 coating the component with a fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate;
 and
 orally administering the coated component to the animal.
- 2. The method of claim 1 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is fructan.
- 3. The method of claim 2 wherein the fructan has an average degree of polymerization in the approximate range of 2 to 60.
- 4. The method of claim 3 wherein the fructan has an average degree of polymerization in the approximate range of 2 to 20.
- 5. The method of claim 4 wherein the fructan has an average degree of polymerization in the approximate range of 2 to 10.
- 6. The method of claim 1 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is fructo-oligosaccharide.
- 7. The method of claim 1 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is neosugar.
- 8. The method of claim 1 wherein the component is one or more of a mineral, vitamin, drug, bacteria, yeast, immune stimulator, nutrient, nutraceutical, electrolyte, chelated mineral, mold, enzyme, energy-providing compound, antibody, or acid.
- 9. The method of claim 8 wherein the component is bacteria from the genus *Lactobacillus* or *Bifidobacterium*.

- 10. The method of claim 8 wherein the component is a nutraceutical.
- 11. The method of claim 8 wherein the component is an enzyme.
- 12. The method of claim 8 wherein the component is an immune stimulator.
- 13. The method of claim 8 wherein the component is a drug.
- 14. The method of claim 1 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is utilized as an energy source by *Bifidobacterium* species, but not by *Salmonella* species.
- 15. The method of claim 1 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is utilized as an energy source by *Lactobacillus* species, but not by *Escherichia coli*.
- 16. The method of claim 1 wherein the coating step comprises applying powdered fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate with a liquid to form a thin film coating on the component.
- 17. The method of claim 16 further comprising repeating the step of applying the powdered fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate and liquid to achieve a multi-layered coating.
- 18. The method of claim 1 wherein the coating step comprises combining the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate with a liquid to form a mixture and atomizing and spraying the mixture on the component to form a thin film coating on the component.
- 19. The method of claim 18 further comprising repeating the step of applying the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate and liquid mixture to achieve a multi-layered coating.

- 20. The method of claim 1 comprising coating the component with fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate and one or more flavoring agent.
- 21. The method of claim 1 wherein the component is a bacteria.
- 22. The method of claim 21 wherein the bacteria is from the genus *Lactobacillus* or *Bifidobacteria*.
- 23. A coated component made in accordance with the method of claim 1.
- 24. A method of delivering a component to the colon of an animal comprising: coating the component with one or more prebiotics; and orally administering the coated component to the animal.
- 25. The method of claim 24 wherein the prebiotic is a fructose-based oligosaccharide, peptide, protein, or lipid that is not digested or absorbed in a stomach or small intestine, but is fermented by bacteria present in the colon.
- 26. The method of claim 24 comprising coating the component with a mixture of two or more prebiotics.
- 27. The method of claim 26 wherein one of the prebiotics is fructo-oligosaccharide.
- 28. The method of claim 24 comprising coating the component with a mixture of one or more prebiotic and one or more flavoring agent.
- 29. The method of claim 24 wherein the component is one or more of a mineral, vitamin, drug, bacteria, yeast, immune stimulator, nutrient, nutraceutical, electrolyte, chelated mineral, mold, enzyme, energy-providing compound, antibody, or acid.
- 30. A composition for colon-targeted delivery comprising: one or more components to be delivered to the colon; and

- a fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate coating surrounding the component.
- 31. The composition of claim 30 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is fructo-oligosaccharide.
- 32. The composition of claim 30 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is inulin.
- 33. The composition of claim 30 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is neosugar.
- 34. The composition of claim 30 wherein the coating further comprises a flavor enhancing agent.
- 35. The composition of claim 30 wherein the component is one or more of a mineral, vitamin, drug, bacteria, yeast, immune stimulator, nutrient, nutraceutical, electrolyte, chelated mineral, mold, enzyme, energy-providing compound, antibody, or acid.
- 36. The composition of claim 35 wherein the component is one or more beneficial bacteria from the genus *Lactobacillus* or *Bifidobacteria*.
- 37. A composition for colon-targeted delivery comprising:
 one or more components to be delivered to the colon; and
 a coating of one or more prebiotics surrounding the component, wherein at
 least one of the prebiotics is a fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate.
- 38. A method of masking the flavor of a component to be administered orally to an animal comprising coating the component with combination of a fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate and a flavoring agent.

- 39. The method of claim 38 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is fructo-oligosaccharide, inulin, or neosugar.
- 40. A method of enhancing the flowability of a component comprising coating the component with a fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate.
- 41. The method of claim 40 wherein the fructose-based non-digestible carbohydrate is fructo-oligosaccharide, inulin, or neosugar.